

REMARKS

Each of claims 1-20 remains pending and at issue in this application, with claims 1, 18, and 19 being independent claims. With this Response, Applicants amend various claims. Each of the amendments finds support in the application as originally filed and, accordingly, the amendments add no new matter. In view of the amendments above and the remarks below, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejections

Each of claims 1-18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. With this Response, Applicants amend independent claim 1 to recite structural elements of the recited interface. As the Office recognizes, claims 2-17 depend from claim 1 and, accordingly, the amendment of claim 1 overcomes the corresponding rejection of each. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections is therefore respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 101 Rejections

Each of claims 1-18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter. With this Response, Applicants amend independent claim 1 to recite structural features placing the graphical user interface squarely within the scope of inventions contemplated as patentable in 35 U.S.C. § 101. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

Each of claims 1-18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,535,122 to Bristol et al. (hereinafter "Bristol").

As amended, claim 1 recites a graphical user interface that includes a main panel display and an alarm profile display. The main panel display includes a

plurality of alarm indicators each of which is a visual representation of an active alarm for a data input from one or more control modules, equipment modules, or processing units and each of the alarm indicators provides indicia of alarm priority and alarm age. Selecting one of the alarm indicators from the main panel display provides the alarm profile display, which presents **contextual** information for the alarm indicator that was selected from the main panel display. This displayed contextual information includes another alarm indicator to which the selected alarm indicator from the main panel is related, e.g., is a parent. The parental relationship between the selected alarm indicator and the other alarm indicator as recited in amended claim 1 generally provides a top-down or hierarchical view of the alarms within the process control system. For example, the recited parental relationship allows an alarm indicator within the main panel display to represent several child alarm indicators associated with a common process control entity, such as a common area, unit, etc. This feature is illustrated in conjunction with the description of Figs. 18 and 19.

By contrast, Bristol does not disclose displaying alarm indicators in a process control system by displaying the alarm indicators in a parent-child relationship, as generally recited in amended claim 1. More particularly, Bristol fails to describe displaying alarm indicators one having a parental relationship with the other as recited in amended claim 1. Instead, Bristol discloses the display of various categories of alarms. A plurality of buttons allow the operator to view categories and sub-categories of alarms including global categories (i.e., the entire plant), process divisions categories (e.g., Feed Tankage, Furnace, Heat Recovery, etc.), streams categories (e.g., Cooling Water Line, Fuel Line, nitrogen Line, etc.), situations categories (e.g., Bad Separation, Fire Hazard, Flammables Spillage, etc.), and operations categories (Equipment Safety, Quality, Safety, etc.). Selection of any of the category buttons displays alarms in the category, but does not display multiple alarm indicators in which selecting one alarm causes an alarm profile display to provide contextual information corresponding to the selected alarm indicator, or that such contextual information includes another alarm indicator to which the selected alarm indicator is a parent. Bristol discloses displaying alarms in various

configurations and groupings, according to the categories, but does not disclose that the alarm indicators are selectable to cause the display of contextual information. Instead, Bristol discloses selecting buttons (i.e., the categorization buttons) or masks/filters to find groups of alarms. Thus, Bristol does not disclose or suggest selecting an alarm indicator, much less that doing so provides an alarm profile display that provides contextual information about the alarm indicator, or that the contextual information includes another alarm indicator to which the selected alarm indicator is a parent.

Thus, while amended claim 1 and Bristol both are directed to displaying alarm information for a process control system, Applicants submit that amended claim 1 recites a novel technical solution over Bristol. As noted above, amended claim 1 generally recites organizing and displaying the alarms to indicate the parental relationships between the various alarms. Selecting one of the alarm indicators recited by amended claim 1 will present further information about the selected alarm including the selected alarm's relationship to other alarms as well as alarm indicators corresponding to those other alarms. In contrast, Bristol discloses displaying alarm indicators according to one of various categorization schemes. Selecting one of the alarm indicators is not disclosed by Bristol and, in any event, would not present further information about the selected alarm, much less present information of the selected indicator's relationship to the various components and sub-components of the system. As a result, Bristol fails to anticipate claim 1, and Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Each of claims 2-18 depends, directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that each of claims 2-18 is patentable over Bristol at least because each depends from patentable claim 1. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

Each of claims 19 and 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,535,122 to Bristol in view of one or more of U.S. Patent No. 6,810,337 to Ashcraft et al. (hereinafter "Ashcraft"); and U.S. Patent No. 5,768,119 to Havekost et al. (hereinafter "Havekost").

Amended claim 19 is patentable over any and all of Bristol, Ashcraft, and Havekost, individually or in any combination, because none of Bristol, Ashcraft, and Havekost, alone or in any combination, discloses or fairly suggests displaying alarm indicators in a process control system by displaying selected indicators in a parent-child relationship, as generally recited in amended claim 19. Bristol does not disclose the elements recited in amended claim 19 for the same reasons described above in relation to amended claim 1. Instead, Bristol generally only discloses the categorized display of alarm indicators. At the same time, while Ashcraft and Havekost, disclose, respectively, systems capable of alarm tracking and alarm priority adjustment, neither Ashcraft nor Havekost, individually or considered in view of each other and/or Bristol, discloses or fairly suggests that an alarm indicator may be selected and that an alarm profile may be displayed in response to the selected alarm indicator or that a displayed alarm profile includes contextual information about a selected alarm indicator, much less that such contextual information is in the form of another alarm indicator to which the selected alarm indicator is a parent, as claim 19 generally recites.

However, while a combination of Bristol, Ashcraft, and/or Havekost – if such combination is proper, which Applicants do not admit – may or may not generally disclose or suggest displaying information of a selected alarm indicator that corresponds to an object that is also member of a class/subclass hierarchy of other objects, this combination does not operate such that selecting an alarm indicator displays a subclass object's alarms. In particular, this combination does not disclose or suggest any structure that, upon the user selecting an alarm indicator, displays other alarms to which the selected alarm is a parent, as recited by amended claim 19. Because no proper combination of Bristol, Ashcraft, and Havekost describes or suggests displaying child alarm indicators upon selecting a parent alarm

indicator, as generally recited in amended claim 19, Applicants submit that amended claim 19 is patentable over all of Bristol, Ashcraft, and Havekost, individually or in any combination and, accordingly, respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.


Claim 20 depends from independent claim 19. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 20 is patentable over Bristol, Ashcraft, and Havekost, individually or in any combination, at least because each depends from patentable claim 19. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, all remaining claims are in condition for allowance for the reasons provided above. Although Applicants believe that no fees or petitions are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 13-2855 of Marshall, Gerstein & Borun, LLP under Order No. 06005/41112. Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the foregoing comments or any claim amendments deemed needed to result in allowance, Applicants kindly request the Examiner to contact the undersigned by telephone at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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